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AUTHOR Semlak, William D.; And Others
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ABSTRACT

A study used M. Cuffe and J. F. Cragan's three-dimensional model for understanding corporate culture within an organization to describe the managerial styles of chairpersons at Illinois State University. Case studies were completed for 18 chairpersons, who then sorted 60 statements on leadership style on a forced choice continuum from most reflective to least reflective on how they managed their departments. The statements indicated one of three types of leadership style: (1) theory X, which emphasizes a "chain of command" approach; (2) theory Y, which emphasizes employee satisfaction; and (3) theory Z, which emphasizes participative decision making. In addition, the chairpersons answered demographic questions and completed a satisfaction scale. Results showed that the subjects perceived their management styles as flowing from a theory Z culture. However, on two issues--tenure/promotion and "quality control of product"--the subjects operated from theory X. Other findings were that the subjects were reasonably satisfied. They were most satisfied with the opportunity for promotion that being chair offered and, on average, were quite satisfied with their own ability to chair, their rapport with colleagues, and the level of trust, cooperation, and productivity that existed in their departments. (FL)

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Corporate Culture in a University Setting: An Analysis of Theory "X", Theory "Y" and Theory "Z" Cultures within University Academic Departments

By
William D. Semlak
Illinois State University
John Cragan
Illinois State University
Michael Cuffe
University of Minnesota

Presented at the
Central States Speech Association
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Introduction

Within recent years, considerable concern has been expressed about the importance of having effective academic chairpersons. In 1977, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation funded a proposal designed to study the role of the chairperson in academic institutions. The grant recognized that while considerable responsibility for the operation of colleges and universities rested with the chair, most chairpersons came from faculty ranks and had very little administrative experience prior to assuming the position of department leadership. As a result of the research conducted with Kellogg support, the American Council on Education, under the direction of Allen Tucker, has developed a training program designed to assist chairpersons to function more effectively as managers of academic units (Tucker, 1980). One entire unit within that program focuses on the relationship between types of academic deaprtments and the leadership style employed by the chair. The purpose of this study is to further examine that relationship by attempting to operationalize chairperson style in terms explained by contemporary organizational theory.

Previous researchers have looked at chairperson style from a number of perspectives. Tucker (1980) presented a typology based on the work of Maccoby that rather light-heartedly described the chair as fitting a rather broad set of caricatures. For Tucker, a chairperson could function as a spectator by acting as a rather acquiescent or passive manager. Such a style purportedly flourishes in a mature department with a well-developed committee structure for making decisions. The spectator merely handles the day-to-day administrative duties and seldom functions as an advocate.

Some chairs function as technicians by generally running a department in a democratic fashion but, at the same time, prodding the department along through the exercise of authority. A technician as a superb bureaucrat who has mastered the institution's rules and regulations but is often characterized by a concern for following procedure and lacking a sense of vision, imagination, or courage.

Other chairs function as jungle fighters by adopting an aggressive style. Such a chairperson would assume responsibility for being a strong department advocate and effective change agent in an academic unit. The jumgle fighter relinguishes little power or authority and limits departmental democracy by playing a large role in all departmental efforts.

Finally, a chair who displays a wide range of strategies and tactics would function as a gamesman. Such a style reflects a manager who is sometimes managed and a leader who is sometimes led. The gamesman usually can defend both departmental interests as well as work for the overall good of the institution.

Although the above views of chairperson style are descriptive in nature, they are not too useful for a chairperson trying to develop effective leadership. Obviously both universities and departments differ not only in terms of the makeup of the faculty but also in terms of the problems facing an institution. These conditions could create expectations that would render any of the above styles inappropriate.

Other theorists have suggested viewing the role of a manager in different ways. While several authors contributed to his thinking, Douglas McGregor (1960) popularized two different views of management style. McGregor posited that some managers reflect a theory "X" style. This style flows from assumptions that an organization is controlled and directed through the exercise of authority. A chairperson using a theory "X" style would rely on authority from the "chain of command" to make decisions and communicate the policy to the employee (faculty). A second style advanced by McGregor has been labeled a theory "Y" style and emphasizes an integration of individual and organizational goals. An organization in which a theory "Y" style flourishes stresses that satisfied employees are important to its effectiveness.

While neither theory "X" or theory "Y" are managerial strategies per se, they both reflect a set of assumptions about the style that a manager would adopt. However, McGregor's work provides a basis for considering the management style from a two-dimensional model: individual style and organizational factors.

Recently, however, considerable interest in the theory "X" and theory "Y" position has been generated by study of the Japanese industrial model. William Ouchi (1981) posited that the recent success of the Japanese has been partly the result of their development of a new management style. Labeled the theory "Z" model, proponents of its use have suggested that it reflects a somewhat participatory decision-making model. Because of its popularity, a huge "quality circle" movement has developed in the United States. The International Association of Quality Circles estimates that Quality Circles were practiced in 10,000 locations in the United States during 1983 (1983).

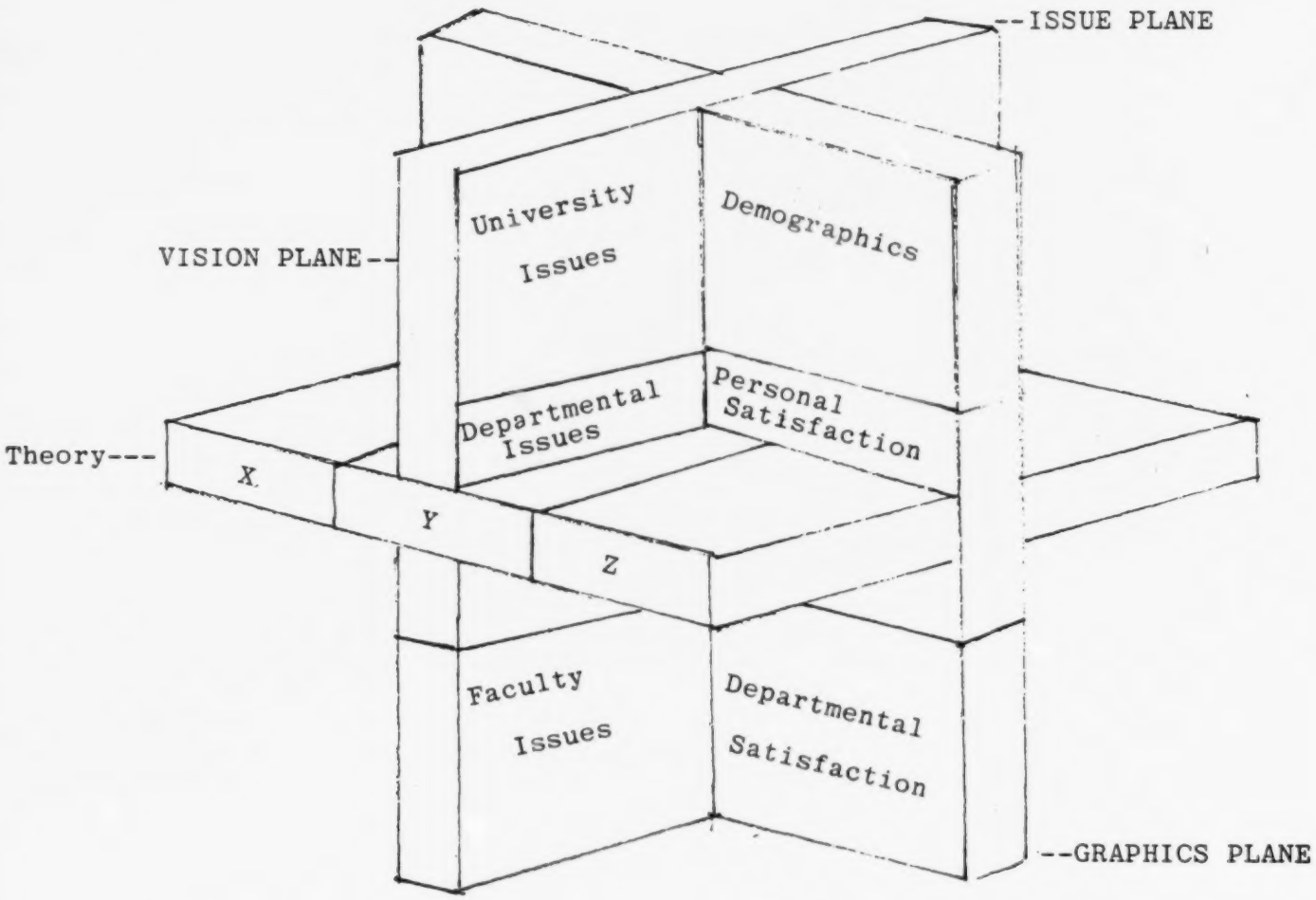
In light of these developments, considerable concern has been generated relating to managerial style within an organization. Cuffe and Cragan (1983) have provided a breakthrough in our understanding of managerial style as a result of their research. They have developed a three-dimensional model for understanding corporate culture within an organization and have constructed an instrument which measures corporate culture and suggests an appropriate managerial style. This study will apply this three-dimensional model to a university setting and describe the managerial styles of chairpersons at Illinois State University.

Research Design

This research is based on a dramatistic theory of communication pioneered by Bormann (1972). The application of the theory is found in the works of Cragan and Shields (1981). The best application of the theory to managerial style is contained in the research report by Cuffe and Cragan (1983).

TABLE 1

LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION THEORY
THREE DIMENSIONAL MATRIX



In Table 1 we depict the management model in terms of a university culture. The horizontal plane of the model includes the three management styles discussed above: theory "X," theory "Y," and theory "Z." One of the vertical planes includes twenty university, departmental, and faculty issues. The second vertical plane includes seven demographics and a twenty item satisfaction index. This model was used to construct two research instruments.

The procedures for conducting this research included five steps: (1) Case studies of chairpersons and a review of relevant historical data; (2) The construction of a Q-deck including sixty statements that reflect a theory X, Y, and Z university environment (20 statements per vision); (3) Construction of an instrument to measure demographic and satisfaction issues; (4) The selection of subjects; and (5) The analysis of the results.

The first procedure was designed to discover the universe of managerial issues and dramatistic positions that could reflect a university from a theory X, Y, and Z perspective. Table 2 lists the twenty university issues on which statements were constructed. A statement reflecting a theory X, Y, and Z university department was constructed for each issue. These statements were constructed based on past research in organizations, as well as focus group interviews with university chairpersons. So, in terms of "chairperson as hero," the following three statements were constructed:

1. Theory X: "My chairperson is very assertive, competent and task-oriented."

2. Theory Y: "My chairperson is friendly, compassionate and understanding."

3. Theory Z: "My chairperson is open-minded and committed to shared governance."

In terms of the decision-maker:

1. Theory X: "At our university, major policy decisions are made by the administration. The faculty members have the responsibility to implement the decisions once they are made."

2. Theory Y: "Most policy decision-making at our university is done by the administration but they regularly seek advice from the academic senate before they make a decision."

3. Theory Z: "Major policy decisions at our university are reached following an open dialogue between faculty and administrators. The faculty play a major role in policy formulation."

The third stage of the study consisted of constructing a questionnaire designed to retrieve demographic data and measure membership satisfaction of the chairperson. The instrument included in this study contained 20 items to assess chairperson satisfaction. Both the sixty-card Q-sort and the satisfaction index were based on the earlier work of Cuffe and Cragan (1983).

TABLE 2

DEPARTMENTAL CULTURE PROFILE

	ARCHETYPAL	UNIVERSITY	CULTURES
I. UNIVERSITY ISSUES	X	Y	Z
1. Department Philosophy	1X	1Y	1Z
2. Chairperson as Hero	2X	2Y	2Z
3. Department Villain	3X	3Y	3Z
4. Innovation in Department	4X	4Y	4Z
5. Authority	5X	5Y	5Z
6. Role Specialization	6X	6Y	6Z
7. Quality Control	7X	7Y	7Z
II. MANAGERIAL ISSUES			
8. Decision-Making	8X	8Y	8Z
9. Temporary Faculty	9X	9Y	9Z
10. Conflict Management	10X	10Y	10Z
11. Personal Problems	11X	11Y	11Z
12. Time Management	12X	12Y	12Z
13. Chair Proxemics	13X	13Y	13Z
III. FACULTY ISSUES			
14. Administrator or Teacher/ Scholar	14X	14Y	14Z
15. Trust	15X	15Y	15Z
16. Motivation	16X	16Y	16Z
17. Dissent	17X	17Y	17Z
18. Tenure/Promotion	18X	18Y	18Z
19. Professional Representation	19X	19Y	19Z
20. Termination	20X	20Y	20Z

Eighteen chairpersons at Illinois State University constitute the data base of the study. There are twenty-eight permanent chairs at ISU. The subjects sorted the sixty statements on leadership style on a forced-choice continuum from most reflective to least reflective of how they manage their departments. The forced distribution was 2-3-6-11-6-3-2 for a nine-cell sort. They answered seven demographic questions and reacted to the twenty-item satisfaction scale on a four-point range of strongly dissatisfied to strongly satisfied.

Results

The average demographic profile of the eighteen chairpersons in this study is:

1. Age: 48 years old
2. Sex: 15 males; 3 females
3. Rank: 12 full professors; 6 associate professors
4. Tenured: 17 yes; 1 no
5. Years of teaching at ISU: 13.5 years
6. Years of chairing at ISU: 7.2 years
7. Size of department: 26.5 professors

The data from the eighteen sixty-statement Q-sort were Q-factor analyzed by means of Tubergen's Quanal Program for Q-analysis, providing the Principle Components Solution with Varimax rotation to simple structure and a Weighted Rotational Analytical Procedure that ranked statements for each factor by means of descending z-scores.

Factor analysis of the data provided a two factor composite picture of how chairpersons at Illinois State University perceive their own management style. Specifically, twelve of the eighteen chairpersons loaded on a major factor type which accounted for 35% of the variance with the remaining six subjects loading on the second factor which represented only 6% of the total variance. In addition, the second factor was 60% correlative to Factor 1 and the Humphrey Test for significance suggests that the second factor is not meaningful. In short, eighteen chairpersons from five different colleges at ISU have a remarkably common view of how they see their leadership styles.

Table 3 depicts the top ten statements in rank order and the bottom ten statements in rank order that comprise Factor 1. It is clear that the twelve chairpersons that loaded on Factor 1 perceive themselves as mostly "Z" type managers. Six of the top ten cards come from "Z" culture while only two cards were chosen from Theory "X." In addition, these administrators strongly rejected an "X" style on most management issues. Seven of the ten statements that they rejected are from the pool of twenty Theory "X" messages.

TABLE 3

DEPARTMENTAL CULTURE PROFILE
FACTOR TYPE I
Z DOMINATED CULTURE

Accepted Statements (ranked 1-10) Rejected Statements (ranked 51 -60)

	ARCHETYPAL CULTURES	UNIVERSITY CULTURES	
I. UNIVERSITY ISSUES	X	Y	Z
1. Departmental Philosophy	55th (-1.6)		3rd (+1.4)
2. Chairperson as Hero			6th (+1.3)
3. Department Villain			
4. Innovation in Department			2nd (+1.6)
5. Authority	58th (-1.9)		4th (+1.3)
6. Role Specialization			
7. Quality Control	5th (+1.3)		
II. MANAGERIAL ISSUES			
8. Decision-Making	51st (-1.2)		
9. Temporary Faculty			
10. Conflict Management		53rd (-1.4)	
11. Personal Problems			
12. Time Management		7th (+1.3)	
13. Chair Proxemics	52nd (-1.4)		9th (+1.2)
III. FACULTY ISSUES			
14. Administrator or Teacher/ Scholar	57th (-1.7)	1st (+1.6)	
15. Trust	60th (-2.0)		
16. Motivation			
17. Dissent	59th (-1.9)		10th (+1.1)
18. Tenure/Promotion	8th (+1.2)	56th (-1.6)	54th (-1.4)
19. Professional Representation			
20. Termination			

The subjects in Factor 1 perceive themselves as administrators/ scholars. Their top-ranked statement reads: "The chair in my department is expected to administer the department, but continues to do some teaching and research to maintain professional competency." (Ranked 1st) They strongly reject being portrayed as "an administrator who does not do much teaching and research." (Ranked 57th)

The second highest ranked message came from Theory "Y." The chairs believe: "Innovation and change naturally occur because of continuous discussion between chairpersons and faculty." (Ranked 2nd)

The subjects are clear on their management philosophy. They accept the "Z" culture statement: "My academic department's philosophy boils down to balancing the university's need to educate students with the professor's expressed needs to grow professionally through research and public service," (Ranked 3rd) and they reject with equal rigor the "X" culture statement: "My department's philosophy boils down to the fact that we are primarily concerned with educating undergraduate students. The faculty needs to adjust their scholarship and service to satisfy this university mission." (Ranked 55th)

A "Z" culture exists at ISU on the issue of authority as perceived by department chairpersons. The subjects ranked the following statement fourth: "In my department we maintain a strong commitment to shared governance. The chairperson's opinion is treated the same as the opinion of any other professors," while they reject the "X" culture statement: "In my department the chairperson exercises a great deal of authority. This authority is derived from the chain of command in the university." (Ranked 58th)

The chairpersons view their heroic persona as that of a "Z" culture manager who "is open-minded and committed to shared governance," (Ranked 6th) and they do not believe they have faculty members in their department who are "incompetent and do little more than the minimum necessary." (Ranked 50th)

The chairpersons "feel comfortable socializing with the faculty. He or she sees little difference between the chair and the other faculty members." (Ranked 9th) Also, they portray their department leadership style as "Z" when they accept the "Z" statement on the issue of dissent. The card reads: "In my department the faculty is encouraged to challenge and question the chairperson. Most faculty in our department do not hesitate to question the chairperson about a decision with which they disagree." (Ranked 10th)

On the issue of teaching schedules and commitee assignments, the chairpersons adopt a "why"leadership style in that they are "flexible and willing to adjust individual assignments based on faculty research and service responsibilities." (Ranked 7th)

They are only two issues in which ISU chairpersons perceive themselves as working from a theory "X" leadership style. The issues are quality control and tenure/promotion. On the issue of quality control, a major issue for Japanese industry, the subjects prefer the "X" culture

statement: "In my department the chairperson in consultation with the DFSC is primarily responsible for monitoring and maintaining the quality of the teaching, research and public service." (Ranked 5th) They did not accept the "Z" culture statement: "In my department the entire faculty feels responsible for maintaining quality teaching, research and service. We continually have discussions of how we can improve in these areas."

On the issue of tenure and promotion, the chairs uniformly reject the "Y" culture statement which reads: "Tenure and promotion in my department is not only accomplished by hard work but by getting along with the key faculty in our department." (Ranked 56th) Also, the "Z" statement on tenure and promotion is among the ten most rejected ideas by ISU chairpersons. The "Z" card states: "While teaching, research and service are important, long-term meritorious service and dedication to our department and university are the key to tenure and promotion around here." (Ranked 54th) The "X" tenure/promotion statement that is accepted reads: "The only way to get tenure and promotion in my department is to be an aggressive scholar and effective teacher. Meeting documented department standards for teaching, research and service earns tenure and promotion in our department." (Ranked 8th)

The sorting behavior of the chairpersons who loaded on Factor 2 is 60% like the factor structure of Type 1. However, there are three issues that are primarily responsible for producing a second factor type. The issues are: Professional Representation, Temporary Faculty, and Department Philosophy Towards Teaching, Research and Service.

The six chairpersons on the second factor believe their departments are primarily concerned with "educating undergraduates and that the faculty must adjust their scholarship to satisfy the teaching mission." (Z-score +1.0) Also, these six chairpersons differ from the other twelve administrators on the handling of temporary faculty. The six reject the "Z" culture statement: "While the university defines some faculty as temporary in our department we treat all faculty members as equal on all issues over which we have justification." (Ranked 54th) The twelve that loaded on Factor 1 ranked this card 12th.

The biggest issue that produced a second factor type is professional representation. This is a salient topic at ISU and other Illinois state universities at the present time. The chairpersons that loaded on Factor 1 remain neutral on the issue. They did not accept or reject the "X", "Y", or "Z" statements on unionization. However, the six administrators loading on Factor 2 clearly did. These six chairpersons strongly reject the "X" and "Y" statments while clearly accepting the "Z" culture position.

1. Theory X: "In my department the faculty feel a need to be represented by a strong faculty organization to negotiate with the university administration." (Ranked 60th)

2. Theory Y: "In my department the faculty feel a need to be associated with a professional organization to promote academic freedom and other faculty issues." (Ranked 58th)

TABLE 4

DEPARTMENTAL CULTURE SATISFACTION INDEX
Copyright, 1983, Cragan and Cuffe

Very Dissatisfied = 1; Dissatisfied = 2; Satisfied = 3; Very Satisfied = 4

	MEAN SCORE N=18
Personal Satisfaction	
1. Job security	3.2
2. Pay	2.6
3. Opportunity for promotion	3.8
4. Recognition you get	2.7
5. How the university handles your personal problems	3.2
6. Your sense of achievement	3.1
7. Amount of responsibility you have	3.0
8. Freedom to do your work	3.1
9. Your job	3.1
10. Your work environment	2.9
11. Time allotted to do your job	2.8
Departmental Satisfaction	
12. Cooperation from fellow workers	3.3
13. Level of trust in department	3.3
14. Competency of chairperson	3.4
15. Level of departmental respect or pride	3.2
16. Quality of departmental work	3.2
17. Acceptance of my ideas by department	3.2
18. Level of departmental productivity	3.2
19. The training I receive for present job	2.7
20. Acceptance of departmental ideas by colleagues	3.1

3. Theory Z: "In my department the faculty feel that they can effectively work with the administration without a professional organization to represent us." (Ranked 1st)

The demographic differences between the two groups of chairpersons may help explain the differences on the above three issues. The six chairpersons in Factor 2 have an average department size of 18.3 professors, while the average size of the departments of the chairpersons who load on Factor 1 is 30.6 professors. Also, the six chairs in Factor 2 tend to be older, have more years on the job as chairperson, and have more years of teaching at ISU.

Table 4 displays the mean scores of the eighteen chairpersons on a twenty-item satisfaction index. There are five items that ISU chairpersons register with: Pay, Job Recognition, Work Environment, Sufficient Time to Do the Job, and the Amount of Training Received for the Position of Chairperson. We held face-to-face discussions with some of the chairs. These conversations were punctuated with observations about the cramped working environment of most departmental chairpersons; the mounds of trivial administrative work; the almost historic lack of recognition that the central administration provides the chairperson; the fact that university professors have been declining in real dollars for over eight years; and, of course, the realization that they never received any training for the job.

However, overall the chairpersons are reasonably satisfied as evidenced by their reaction to the other fifteen items. They are most satisfied with the opportunity for promotion that being chair affords and, on average, they are quite satisfied with their own ability to chair, their rapport with their colleagues, and the level of trust, cooperation, and productivity that exists in their departments.

Conclusion

The chairpersons at Illinois State University perceive their management styles as basically flowing from a Theory "Z" culture. However, the two issues that are generally regarded as very important to a "Z" culture, namely quality control of the "product" and tenure/promotion, are not present at ISU. Instead, the chairpersons operate from Theory "X" on these two issues.

If the chairpersons as ISU receive a raise, some recognition for their work, and a little more space and time to do their jobs, they would be quite satisfied with their departments and university. How the subordinates of these administrators see the departmental culture is the subject of our next study.

A final note: It appears ironic that at the very time American priate organizations, such as Chrysler, seem to be embracing a Theory "Z" corporate culture and moving away from the traditional Theory "X" of management vs. labor, the universities in Illinois are moving towards Theory "X" and away from a "Z" culture with their renewed interest and, in some cases, acceptance of a faculty union.

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